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ABSTRACT

The numbers of women entering the workforce have steadily risen since the mid 1950s. The nature of the family unit has correspondingly changed; the family in which the man was the husband and breadwinner and the woman was wife and mother devoted full time to home and family is a rarity. The attempt on the part of working family members to accommodate the demands of both work and family has given rise to a broad range of problems. This paper surveys the efforts undertaken by labor unions to respond to these problems, including: child and elder care, health care, transportation, access to community services, alternative work schedules, vacations and leaves for both parents, and choice, according to changing need, among a variety of employee benefit plans. (DB)

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Union Initiatives in Dealing with Family Problems

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Paper prepared for the Panel on Employer Policies and Working Families
Committee on Women's Employment and Related Social Issues
Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education
National Research Council/National Academy of Sciences

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UNION INITIATIVES IN DEALING WITH FAMILY PROBLEMS*

Alice H. Cook

Ever since the war, when women entered the labor force in massive numbers, unions with sizable female memberships have shown concern about resolving the conflicts that arise between demands of work and family. At first these concerns were directed mainly toward women who were widely perceived by unionists, as by most other elements in society, as the adults primarily responsible for maintaining home and family, even when some of them worked outside the home. In the course of the decades since the mid-50s when women began again to move massively into the labor force, unions as well as employers are challenged by the fact that the family of the pre-war period has become a rarity.

In the late 80s only about 10 percent of families are constructed on the model that obtained when the war began - a breadwinning father and husband, a wife and mother devoted full-time to home and family. Well over half the families now are supported by the earnings of both parents; another 12-14 percent are single-parent families, headed largely by women either divorced or never-married. Many women among this latter group, like many working wives, are responsible for elderly relatives who are ill or infirm, and who make up an adult household, dependent on a single woman earner.

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The attempt on the part of working family members to accommodate the demands of both work and family, however these institutions may be constituted, has given rise to a broad range of problems, to which many unions, as well as a growing number of employers are trying now to respond.

These problems include child and elder care, maintenance of health for the whole family, transportation, access to community services, alternative work schedules, vacations and leaves for both parents, and choice, according to changing need, among a variety of employee benefit plans. We have seen in other chapters in this volume something of the employer response. In this chapter we look at what unions are doing, both on their own initiative and in joint action with management.

WOMEN IN UNIONS

The women joining the labor force in large numbers year for year have been recruited largely into the service trades and professions: office work, health care, child and elder care, government employment including education and social services, retail sales, tourism, real estate, banking, insurance, all of them occupations - with the exception of school teaching - which had never been strongly organized. At the same time as the decline of the smokestack industries and the consequent loss of their many members.

Unions have had to recognize this shift in the economy from primary dependence on manufacturing to service industries, and at the same time this shift in gender proportions within the total

labor force. These show up clearly in Table 1.

Even over a single year, these figures show not only the growth in the total labor force and an improvement in union membership but the trend of women to increase in percentage of union membership, even over a single year, as well as the increase by percentage of both part-time and full-time workers who are union members, 90 percent of whom are women.

In self-interest as well as a new sensitivity to women's role in the economy, many unions began to enlarge their jurisdictions, to set up staffs and to devise internal structures to recruit women and servce their special interests. Much of this latter shift in emphasis was in response to the changes taking place in law and social policy on the subject of gender equality. As we shall shortly see, women within the unions set up their own national organization (CLUW) in 1974 to increase their visibility and influence within as well as outside the labor movement. Table 2 tells in numbers the story of what went on in the short period from 1977-1985.

By 1986 it was possible for the Director of the AFL-CIO Department of Professional Employees, to say,

> From 1975 to 1984, women contributed more than 62 percent of total U. S. employment growth, and they are the backbone of the white collar ans service sectors of the economy, ... Women are in many of the jobs which have experienced the greatest growth...They work for companies which are major targets for unions today. [They] now comprise 41 percent of all union members, up from 19 percent in 1956...In the past 20 years women accounted for half of all new union members...These new members are having an impact on union concerns (Golodner and Gregory).

When CLUW named 1985 the Year of the Family and summoned labor to a demonstration on the Washington Mall, several hundred

thousand union men and women responded in specific support of the "Parental and Disability Leave Act of 1985." By 1986, the AFL-CIO had declared at its Convention "an all-out fight for women's rights"(BNA, 1986 Appendix C&D), and had adopted resolutions on child-care and social services and issued fact sheets on child care, and family and work.

Neither unions nor employers, however, were the first to raise these issues. The concerns of these vital labor market institutions with family matters came late. The women's movement post-1960 itself was first concerned with implementing through affirmative action and otherwise the legislation providing for equality for women in the labor market. Only after facing issues that arose in implementing affirmative action and the requirements of Title VII on equal employment opportunity for women did it become clear that women came into the labor market heavily burdened with the responsibilities of home and children, responsibilities that their male partners shared only marginally. Single women heads of families had these burdens too, but were quite unassisted. The concept that women under these circumstances could not experience equality in the world of work developed slowly, both among policy makers and administrators. Late in the 70s for example, the U. S. Civil Rights Commission called for research which would investigate the degree to which inability to find appropriate and adequate child care acted to discriminate against women seeking employment (U. S. Civil Rights Commission).

In 1974, trade union women had gathered for a first-of-its-

kind convention in Chicago to found the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) (Baxandall, Gordon, Reverby 390-99; Milkman, 1985B 300-322; Needleman, Tanner, 210-211). Not limited to women members of AFL-CIO unions and welcoming independent unions and other bargaining agencies (such as the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Nurses Association (ANA)), trade union women drew up a program of "women's issues in the working class." CLUW in the beginning put its emphasis mainly on issues of women's organization, representation, and leadership It moved rapidly to dealing with substantive issues of major concern to women. In doing so it built close alliances to non-union organizations within the women's movement. Indeed, its substantive program is now identical in most respects with the concerns of feminists: child care, parental leave, pregnancy protection and maternity leave, alternate work schedules, training for women for non-traditional jobs, and dependent care assistance.

To achieve these goals, trade union women in national and local unions approach these issues with the tools of two implementing devices in their kits: they hope to put these issues both in their collective bargaining agendas and in their unions' legislative programs at state and federal levels. CLUW's chief approach is educational. It carries on research on conditions of working women and makes its findings available to women leaders in national and local unions, as well as disseminating information obtainable through Department of Labor, BNA, and academic studies, couched in appropriate contract language that can be used in local bargaining[1] (CLUW, 1988,1989).

A number of individual unions have produced similar papers or brochures for the use of their bargainers. Among these are the American Federation of Teachers(AFT), American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees(AFSCME), Association of Flight Attendants(AFA), Communications Workers of America(CWA) Service Employees International Union(SEIU), and The Newspaper Guild (TNG).[2] As the Wall Street Journal headlined on December 2, 1986, "More Family Issues Surface at Bargaining Tables as Women Show Increasing Interest in Unions." We turn now to some of these special interests.

PREGNANCY, MATERNITY, PARENTAL and FAMILY LEAVE

The United States is an exception to all other developed countries in never having adopted any form of prescribed maternity leave, both before and after birth, for women workers, with or without pay. Some unions, however, - notably the (AFT) - had already bargained for paid leave much earlier.[3] Then, with the advent of equal opportunity legislation in the 60s, the AFT began to use the term, "parental leave," in order not to be possibly guilty of providing a benefit for one gender and not the other. However, the pronominal "she" usually indicated the intended beneficiary. What was meant was not the extended "parental leave" now proposed in the 1989 versions of the Bill before the 101st Congress. Under this heading, however, some locals actually achieved "short term paternal leave," allowing the father of a newborn to take off the day of birth or the one immediately following, as paid leave. " Parental leave" has now generally been substituted for post-natal maternity leave

and usually designates a leave for infant care.

Although organized labor, for some time, generally favored maternity leave benefits, although "actual union efforts in this area have not always been vigorous," as BNA (1987, p.44) tells us, in presenting a Congressional Research Service(CRS) analysis. In a recent BNA study of 400 sample agreements, 35 percent contain maternity leave clauses, with the amount of leave varying from three months to a year, most of it without pay. BNA quotes Freeman and Medoff as saying that "nonunion employers offer more maternity pay with leave, while union employers are more likely to guarantee full reemployment rights after maternity"(1987, 44-5).

In the public sector where sick leave is widely granted, and, when unused, accumulated, some employers allow pregnant workers to use all accumulated sick leave with pay before going on "unpaid maternity leave." Unions that have been successful in providing for maternity leave pay include ACTWU, AFA, AFT, AFSCME, Amalgamated Transit (ATU), SEIU, and TNG. (CLUW, Chap. 4, 5-6).

Interestingly neither employers nor unions - nor indeed the women's movement generally - have initiated programs for legislation on maternity leave. Legislators have also treated it as a non-issue. The only circumstance in which it has come into public debate is in five states that soon after the war adopted an insurance system to pay workers who suffer disabilities, including pregnancy. The amount typically has been equivalent to unemployment compensation. Courts in California (one of these states) decided however that pregnancy disability did not fall

within the meaning of the law and therefore that pregnant women did not have its protection. After, they were sustained by the Supreme Court, Congress amended Title VII to require employers to treat pregnancy like any other disability "for all employment related purposes." A number of other states thereupon introduced pregnancy disability laws. But a woman in a state where such a law does not exist has no right under the federal legislation to such protection (BNA, 1987, 9-24).

In 1987, Representative Pat Schroeder and William Clay with 73 co-sponsors introduced the Family and Medical Leave Act into the Congress. It provided that an employee in a firm with at least 50 employees should be entitled to a total of 18 workweeks of family leave during any 24 month period because of the birth or adoption of a child or to care for a child or parent with a serious health condition (Panaro, 71-2). The bill underwent many changes after hearings in both House and Senate and came up for a vote in late 1988. Support for the bill was massive, coming from AFL-CIO and many of its unions in alliance with dozens of organizations voicing the needs of both women and children. The Senate however on a technicality postponed a vote until after the presidential election, a tactic which killed the bill in the 100th Congress. As this is written the bill has been reintroduced into the 101st Congress. In its present form it would apply only to firms employing more than 25 workers. It would state the right of such leavetakers to return to their jobs or to equivalent ones. However, it does not contemplate any pay during such leave (BNA 1987, 158-187). This bill is nevertheless strongly supported by a coalition of women's and labor organizations, in part because

it defines the entitlement to such leave in family and not just maternal terms, and in part, because once adopted, it will clearly open up many bargaining opportunities for unions seeking to provide more adequate protection and some income for employees on parental leave. Many unions have already bargained successfully for parental leaves, though usually of somewhat shorter duration and covering only child care.

CHILD CARE

The first union, the Amalgamated Clothing [and Textile] Workers (ACTWU), to set up a child care program, in 1968 took full responsibility for managing a number of centers, financed by employers through the joint union-management Health and Welfare Fund. Within a relatively short period several centers were operating under agreements between employers and joint boards of the union in the respective local "markets."[4]

> By 1981 there were six ACTWU centers, One site, in Baltimore, is supported by a special child care fund jointly administered by managements and labor. Operating costs are heavily subsidized to hold down enrollment fees (USDOL,139).

During World War II, the United States quickly recognized the need for child care as millions of women moved into war production. The Lanham Act which set up child care centers with federal funds throughout the country was, however, written only "for the duration" (Skold). After the Armistice was signed with Japan in August, 1945, federal support for these institutions ceased and as men returned from Europe and the Pacific to reclaim their jobs, women went back to their homes.

Senator Walter Mondale became the advocate for a new piece

of child care legislation in the Nixon administration, but it was vetoed by the President on the grounds that the government should not interfere in what were properly the affairs of the family (Folbre, 79).[5]

Public vs. Private Initiative

Advocates of federal support for child care count some 80 organizations in the Alliance for Better Child Care (National Forum). It includes the AFL-CIO and many of its affiliates, and is headed by the President of the Children's Defense Fund. (National Forum). The Alliance supports an "ABC" bill which would provide federal funds to states for the support of child care in various forms (Business Week). Another proposal is that of President Bush who backs a proposal to allow parents of pre-school children a tax allowance of $1,000 per year. But none of this to date has become legislation (Tolchin). So far as the unions are concerned, in their effort to get sufficient funding to respond to the compelling needs of their members, they are thrown back on legislative action in the states, many of which now provide some assistance for programs of child care. In the short run, however, they endeavor to get employers to work with them in financing one or another of a variety of assistance programs, with or without public assistance.

Among the programs of concern to parents among their members are, at various stages in the life cycle, infant and toddler care, pre-school groups, after-school and vacation programs, long-day care, care during working shifts in evenings and nights. Many parents prefer to place young children in family day care rather

than in centers, partly because groups are smaller, but more often because the service is usually cheaper than institutional care. Problems arise particularly over the care of handicapped children and of children who are sick.

Unions and Employer-Sponsored Child Care Programs

Employer-sponsored, on-site child care is welomed by some parents and subsidized by some employers. The CLUW study states that 71 per cent of the employer-assisted child care programs are in hospitals with a few others in government installations but very little in the private sector (1989 Chap.2, p. 7). Many parents in any case have serious doubts about transporting children to workplaces during rush hours and are concerned about air and noise pollution there. Moreover, employers in small businesses may have neither the parental demand nor the financial and staff resources to allow them to build and maintain child care centers.

Resource and Referral Services

Unions are primarily concerned with responding to their members' needs and wishes, but they are not unmindful of what employers with whom they deal may be willing or able to finance. A first step is often to ask the employer to set up a resource and referral service, to which parents can go for information about available community resources - their requirements, the hours they are open, their costs, sources of assistance to meet these costs, including tax allowances, whether they are licensed, i.e., meet state or local statutory standards (CLUW, Chap. 1).

According to BNA, the Conference Board reported in 1984 (BNA, 1986, p. 25) that about 500 such services were functioning and that the number was steadily growing. The proportion of these that were union initiated is not known.

Labor-Management Committees and Their Programs

In setting up a child care program, unions often ask for the establishment of a labor-management child care committee. Such a committee can keep both management and employees informed about the degree to which existing community facilities meet parents' needs in respect to hours, availability of places, quality of service, and costs, information which may influence both parties to push for the establishment of more and better services, including perhaps a center of their own.

One of the most inclusive and successful of the labor-management sponsored programs is that in New York State between the state and its major unions. A federal grant allowed for the establishment of the first worksite center in Albany in 1979. Originally 10 centers were planned but by spring 1989 38 centers were functioning throughout the State with service for 2,500 children. One indication both of satisfaction and of need is a waiting list of 2,400 children. Service is offered for children from 8 weeks to 5 years old and some of the centers provide kindergarten and school-age programs as well. Other states, including Massachusetts, New Jersey and California, which are working with unions in the public sector (AFSCME, SEIU, CWA) are following this example.

In addition to on-site childcare centers, New York employees

have a full range of family supportive policies available to them: maternity leave, child care leave which parents can share up to two years off, flexible work schedules, part time work, job-sharing, and TOTS (take off the summer) when employees can go off payroll (and cover their own benefits).

Each Center belongs to the private non-profit corporation, The Empire State Day Care Services, Inc., which initiates non-profit day care cemters and coordinates management with the state.

New contracts will expand services including programs for evening shift workers and overtime workers, which it is hoped will encourage the recruitment of employees (particularly nurses) on the evening and night shifts. Margaret Doolin of the Governor's Office of Employee Relations with which the unions bargain, believes that the system works, because, as she said at a Spring 1989 conference on Employer Policies and Working Families,

> New York State is highly unionized with 200,000 employers 93 percent organized and over half of them are women. The unions forced the State to look at and make financial commitments to issues they might not have otherwise considered. Unions provide a forum and a funding source outside of the bureaucracy. New York State's history of good labor management relations allowed them to focus on common goals rather than disparities.6

Most of the on site programs that CLUW notes are in hospitals and in governmental offices. Hospital employees and particularly those on shift work have special needs, while governmental agencies may be persuaded to present themselves as models to the private sector (CLUW, Chap. 12).

Labor and Community Sponsorship

As the BNA (1986) report notes, "Onsite day care facilities are seldom the best solution to child care problems." (p. 34) In the early 80s, the ILGWU received a request from its largest local union, made up mainly of women living in Chinatown, New York City, with about 500 children in need of preschool care. With both residences and garment shops located in close proximity, it seemed feasible to approach both the employers association and the city for assistance. A board representing these three interest groups was established with the City putting up 60 percent of the operating costs, while the Board raised the remaining funds from gifts and grants. A total of 80 places are available. Children are selected by lot from about 300 applications per year for the approximately 20 available slots. Fees range up to $10 per week per child. (Parents earn only about $8-10,000 per year) (Chen).

Child Care Costs

The high cost of providing quality child care forces many families to make choices that are less than desirable by any standard. SEIU has estimated the cost at about $3,000 per year and rising, or half the income of many workers employed at or near the minimum wage. The cost element alone explains why many unions seek to bargain with their employers for one or more of a wide variety of assistance schemes.

Vouchers, Slots, Cafeteria Plans, and DCAP

One option is a direct subsidy in the form of a voucher reimbursing the employee for some portion of the cost of care. Another is for a company to purchase "slots" - spaces -

reserved for employees with a local child-care provider. Many employers have chosen to establish programs known as "cafeteria" plans, or "flexible benefit" plans that provide an array of benefits, including child care. Lastly by offering these plans as part of a Dependent Care Assistance Plan (DCAP), companies can allow employees to receive them tax-free. (CLUW, Chapter 12).

Although these approaches are not radical, the Conference Board in 1985 had reports of only 25 such plans in operation (BNA, 1986, p. 25).

Some union contracts however call for a variation on employer assistance in the form of cash reimbursements to permanent employees out of an employer-established fund annually replenished at a pre-determined amount. Lump sum payments from the funds reported amount to $500, in some cases with a sliding scale for more than one child. While many of these programs exist for municipal and state employees, several are also in the private sector (NYC/CLUW,p.43-46; BNA, DLR, 1985; CLUW, Chap 12; USDOL Summary).

Another approach allows employees to pay for child care in pre-tax dollars. The employee requests that the employer reduce his or her salary by the amount he/she expects to pay for child care during the year. This amount is placed in a DCAP fund and used to reimburse the employee for his/her actual child care expenses. For tax purposes, the amount paid out can be set aside in federal income tax payments and also in some cases in state and city taxes. In the contract between the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA/AFSCME) and the State of New York, the State agreed to recommend to the legislature passage of the appropriate and necessary bills to implement the program.[7]

A sorry anomaly in the effort to make child care affordable

is the fact that salaries of child carers make up a major element of cost, although child-care workers themselves are very poorly paid, almost totally unorganized[8] and rarely benefit from an employer-sponsored benefit program (Collins). The result is that they have little incentive to take extensive training or to remain long on the job when something better paid turns up. Under such conditions everybody suffers, parents and children as well as Center employees.[9] Unions in this regard operate with a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they can influence the adequate provision of child care; on the other, they can try to organize the care-providers. Indeed, without governmental and employer assistance, child carers and parents alone must pay the heavy costs of child care. They do so at great sacrifice as Hartmann and Spalter-Roth and an SEIU (1988) study have well demonstrated.

The conclusion to which more and more experts come is that the widespread need and demand for child care cannot be adequately met by parents and employers alone. Only public subsidies can meet the country's social need, as many experts have concluded, it is at this point that labor unions' intense concern with federal and state child care legislation is to be understood (Business Week, Hewlett, Ilchman and Sweeney; Kamerman; O'Connell and Bloom; Sidel).

ELDER CARE

Elder Care has only recently been recognized as in a class with child care in the sense that with the great increase in dual-earner families, the middle-aged daughter or daughter-in-

law who took on care of her or her husband's parents as they became infirm, is no longer available for those tasks.

Older women "by every economic measure are more deprived in their later years than are men" (Women Studies Program, 27). The result is increased demand for facilities for housing and care of the elderly, and the provision of insurance that will cover such care. A less drastic but nevertheless compelling need has arisen for the provision of "family leave" to allow working younger adults to take time from work to care for any close family members, including elderly parents in the household.

> It is estimated that between one-quarter and one-third of the workforce might have some caregiving responsibilities for an aging relative. [One survey] found caregivers providing on average, 10 hours of care per week. About 10 per cent provided 35 hours of care. A substantial portion - between one-quarter and one-third - of caregivers are responsible for an elderly relative living more than 50 miles away. (CLUW, "Eldercare Benefits and Services," p. 2)

The Family Leave bill before Congress would provide for this kind of leave for an extended number of weeks (originally drafted for 18 weeks of leave and then reduced to 14) within any two year period. It has not been considered possible at this stage to write in paid leave, without which it is doubtful that the working male, so long as he is the better paid of the two working adults in the family will be able to take such leave. It is however a proposal far in advance of any program so far available in the Western World.

Unions are strong supporters of the bill for Family and Medical Leave. For some time a number of them have endeavored through collective bargaining to gain such leaves and ACTWU, SEIU and AFSCME all report successes (ACTWU p.22-23; CLUW, "Eldercare"

p.9-10).

Also in the field of legislation, recent Social Security Act amendments on catastrophic medical care extend hospital benefits, have less restrictive requirements for home health care, cover prescription drugs, extend hospice care benefits and skilled nursing facility benefits, though at greatly increased cost to the elderly, many of whom, and particularly women, are inadequately pensioned (AARP).

Like child carers, those caring for the elderly are mainly women and poorly paid. In a special publication, SEIU Local 434 has called attention not only to their low pay but to their lack of health insurance.

Studies conducted by some employers have amply shown that the failure to provide assistance in meeting the need for elder care among their employees was a source of a great deal of stress, particularly among women, who have had to choose between quitting their jobs to provide care or neglecting parents while continuing to work for needed incomes, (BNA, 1986, p. 63-67). One solution in which ACTWU has played a leading role for many years is in providing elder day care at their medical centers.

HEALTH CARE

In this regard, unions and women's organizations have also turned to employers with some hope of response, because health care, in this country as in no other has devolved mainly upon them. Elsewhere national health insurance is an entitlement for every citizen. Here it is reliably estimated that our "health

care system," such as it is, leaves some 37,000,000 persons without any coverage whatever - the unemployed, children, the never employed and casual workers, self-employed, and those working for employers who carry no health insurance (AFSCME, 1989)

Wide health coverage for unionized, employed workers came in to existence during World War II in the United States. Unions' activity in behalf of increasing wages at that time was forbidden under price and wage controls. The unions turned then to negotiate for indirect or postponed remunerative improvements, such as pensions and health insurance. These were allowed by the War Labor Board and have since become subjects of mandatory bargaining under post-war Labor Board rulings. Many large, non-unionized employers have introduced comparable benefits, often indeed an effort to outflank unionization.

Bit by bit substantial portions of the population not in the labor force have been covered by health insurance. Medicare for all persons over 65 and Medicaid for the indigent have become part of the Social Security program. But working people not covered by a labor-management plan or a beneficent employer have the hard choice of buying their own insurance, often prohibitiverly expensive, or going without. Even for the insured, many insurance schemes fall short of covering the family; or they do so only at extra cost to the worker (SEIU, April, 1988, p. 6; SEIU, Local 434).

The fact that many small employers have been unable to offer such benefits has particularly deprived women of coverage, since a majority of women work for small employers. Insured workers who become unemployed, usually are covered for only a few weeks

after their tie with the employer is severed. Thus about one in five Americans has no health insurance. Even the situation for the insured was precarious until Congress, with the enactment of ERISA, set up minimum standards to which private insurance programs had to adhere. One section of the Act guaranteed equal insurance rights to women as to men beneficiaries; another made insurance a first claim on assets of bankrupt companies or those closing their doors.

Women's position was again made more secure when in 1978, after two negative Supreme Court Decisions, Congress amended Title VII (of the Civil Rights Act, 1964) to make claims for pregnancy disability an entitlement where males received disability insurance. The law, however, as we noted above, does not protect pregnant women who are unemployed or who work for companies not carrying health insurance (BNA, 1987, p.220) The result is that women are greatly benefited when they belong to a union which is able to acquire or improve on health benefits through the union contract.

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Difficulty in finding and funding reliable, full-time child and elder care is one of the major reasons why working parents, and particularly mothers, suffer severe stress from the conflict and overload in the definition of their double duties. In addition, to continuing to carry full responsiblity for home and children, they are expected like men to conform to very rigid hours and work rules in the workplace. But these rules and

requirements devised by and for men presumed a wife at home to relieve the worker of family cares.

The requirements in the two spheres present women (and some men) with severe conflicts in their sense of obligation and loyalty to job and family.

Alternative Working Schedules

Alternatives are various. They include flextime, compressed working schedules, job sharing, part-time work or home work. Even so, persons seeking such adjustments are rarely offered choices among alternatives. The most usual possibility is part-time work, an offering which has grown rapidly in the last decade in certain economic sectors, such as banking, health care, and retail sales (Russakoff and Skrycki).

Part-time Work

Unions historically have opposed part-time work, and have often denied membership to part-time workers. They have seen it as a threat to established wage rates and job conditions. They have believed that persons choosing part-time work had little work commitment, and could not be counted on to make sacrifices in the interests of improving working conditions. On the other hand, employers of relatively unskilled women seeking part-time work typically organize that work around a few routine operations, infinitely repeated, which in effect make women almost completely interchangeable with one another. Thus, if consumer demand peaks at certain times women can be called in to meet only those hours. Often such arrangements mean employers' saving the cost of lunch and refreshment breaks. They can pay

less than standard rates and benefits can be curtailed while on-the-job training for more responsible tasks can be forgotten. Altogether the arrangement is one which favors employer's costs, though at great cost to workers both in the current job and in future prospects for better-paid work.

Unions in the retail trades where a great deal of part-time work has always existed, moved first to recognize the part-time worker. Contracts have often included clauses that both defined and restricted part time work to agreed upon hours with overtime pay when they were extended. Pay was pro-rated based on full-time rates for comparable skill and experience. Part-time workers were guaranteed first bid on full-time jobs as they opened up. Benefits and vacations were to be prorated.

ACTWU is a union of blue-collar workers which in a number of contracts has provided in addition for part-timers' inclusion in health care programs, although usually "only with a contribution from the worker, or after an unusually long waiting period." One contract illustrates these limits on part-timers' benefits. It allows for one-half holiday pay, normal vacation pay, but no vacation days, option of Blue Cross/Blue Shield with one-half paid by the employee, and no pension benefit (ACTWU p. 20).

Compressed schedules or flextime

These programs are a response to working family members who find it extremely difficult to maintain rigid daily time schedules. Flextime usually is a system of work under which everyone in the firm is present during four to six hours, but may vary starting and stopping hours to accomodate personal needs

providing that within a given week everyone works the standard 37 or 40 hours. Although a quarter to a half of workers in some European countries are on flextime, only about 10 percent of the U. S. working population has access to some form of it. With rare exceptions flextime seems more readily adaptable to office than to manufacturing work, although ACTWU has a few contracts that allow sewing department employees to choose their starting hour. Unions want to put flextime in to their contracts in order to control its equitable use and administration. The American Management Association in a 1985 survey found that its use improved both productivity and morale (BNA, 1986, p. 69).

Job Sharing

This approach to easing schedules has been talked about more than practiced. When it is allowed and used, it is mainly women who share a job. In part this occurs because men and women rarely work at the same occupation, so great is the job segregation in American employment. In part, however, women's near monopoly of job sharing is a legacy of the assumption on the part of both men and women that if only one partner is to curtail work in the interests of child care, it should be the child's mother. In part it is a product of the inavailability of quality child care. (Sometimes mothers who share jobs also share child care). A decade ago when job sharing was first talked about and researched in Europe, the assumption was that the two parents might use this method of dividing their responsibilities to work and family. Job sharing may be on the increase as employers have more trouble finding competent workers (Lawson).

Job sharing may theoretically be a division of hours or days or even periods of the year shared by two or more workers. In fact, most of it consists of a division of the week in which one partner may work three days and another, two; or each may work three days, allowing thus for overlap and joint oversight of the single task. It is probably more widely used in public employment than in private, although the one case study reported in BNA, 1986, is of a private, non-union concern in a small town, where the available work force is reported to be small, and women are said to be "delighted" at the opportunity to find a partner with whom they may share a job (p. 75-77).

Union reports of job-sharing come from only two locals and those in the public sector where pay, benefits and vacations are pro-rated, with the understanding that the amounts shall not exceed those paid for one full-time employee, and only those employees working 80 hours or more per month are entitled to insurance benefits (SEIU and AFSCME in CLUW, Chapter 6, p. 4).

Homework

This topic is the latest in workplace accommodation to family needs. When proposed in this sense it is seductive, for its sponsors see it as a means of combining work with home responsibilities. With aa computer in the home, linked to a central system, its mother-operator presumably can combine child care with productive activity. In fact, as firms more and more rapidly move into this mode, its employees on the home front are finding that unless they can isolate themselves from the children by having some form of child care either in or out of the home,

work has to be done at night after the kiddies are in bed. As CLUW puts it,

> The "homework" of the information age is likely to be more attractive to employers than to workers...Without any clear division between their spheres, both work and family life are likely to suffer. And for most employees, work in the home is likely to be even more stressful, subject to exploitation and less rewarding than work in the shop or office. (Chap.6, p. 5)

For the employer the advantages are many. The worker provides space and power for the machine. Payment is by some kind of piece work, often by finger strokes per document. Supervision is carried out by "blind" monitoring of the quality and quantity of work performed.

Unions are very unsure of their ability to deal in a constructive way with the problem. They find that employees most object to the "blind" monitoring which goes on without notification to them. It uses only quantitative measures and makes no allowance for the exigencies of workplace and time events. It gives little recognition to the quality of work. It does not result in opportunities for advancement. Moreover, the worker is quite isolated from colleagues. She has no way of participating in the setting of norms, no basis for comparison of herself with fellow-workers, and no evidence of a comparative or normative kind with which she can counter a supervisor's disciplinary action. AFSCME concludes on this point that,

> homework may cause [homeworkers] to view work-related issues as personal problems and reinforces the misguided notion that responsibility for solving work-family problems is an individual one. (CLUW, Chap. 6, p. 6)

In the BNA's report on what it calls "telecommuting", its one case study is the description of a plan put forward by a

telephone company which had not yet approached the union with it, but planned to do so. The union in question is the CWA (1986, 83).

Workplace Stress

Normal practice at the workplace has developed out of the assumption that the worker was a male - or exceptionally, a single female - and that his obligation to his firm in many respects properly took precedence over that due his family. Indeed the family needs would be amply provided for by his wife. The intrusions on family time, lifestyle and health arising from overtime work, transfers and travel, and from hazards - particularly reproductive hazards - in the workplace all fell in this category.

The changing composition of the workforce has placed all of these elements in a new context, both for the union which has been a traditionally male-dominated institution and the employer.

The CLUW study points out that "because overtime work is often mandatory, the work/family conflicts may be unavoidable. [But] parents wind up feeling trapped." (Chap 7, p. 1). One way of dealing with the problem is to require in the contract advance warning of overtime, and/or the right to refuse it. The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) does this by setting up quarterly an "Overtime desired" list of full-time employees wishing to work overtime, and then making backup provision for covering overtime needs if the list is not long enough to do so. SEIU in one of its contracts requires a 24 hour notice to all employees who may be required for overtime work. The Office Professional Employees Union (OPEIU) in one contract allows

members whose children are in paid child care to receive 75 cents per hour allotment for each overtime hour.

Travel and Transfer

These two employer demands are perhaps the most invasive of family schedules. Their repercussions upset child-care arrangements, children's schools, spouse's employment, family and neighborhood ties. Some employers in interviewing women for employment have sought to avoid the family problems that follow by simply not employing them for jobs that may include such requirements. Indeed the president of Catalyst, a firm that for several years has counselled employers on how best to integrate women into firms on a basis of equality, has now gone so far as to advise both working women and their employers to accept a dual-track employment system that would eliminate women from such jobs if they have or plan to have children. Quickly dubbed "the mommy track," women have reacted strongly against any such discrimination(BNA, 1989). But men as well as women are increasingly concerned to put family ahead of job when relocation puts severe strains on children and adults (NYT, 6/8/89).

The United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and the Maine Employees Association (MSEA) are two unions that have bargained for some restraints on transfer, both in the direction of putting the move on a voluntary basis. "Every effort will be made to take family responsibilities into account in transfers and promotions," reads the UFCW clause.

Reproductive Health Hazards

Work hazards to physical health go to the very core of human identity; reproductive hazards threaten family life. Historically, men have been expected to be willing to continue to work in contaminated and dangerous environments if they received "hazard pay." American Cyanimid probably put the most unacceptable requirement on women in such a circumstance, namely that those in what the company designated as "child-bearing years" should undergo sterilization or lose their jobs.[10]

In this connection, video display terminals (VDTs) have been studied and restudied, based on manifold complaints of reproductive hazards for their users (mainly women). As a result studies have been undertaken both here and abroad. While the evidence is still unclear for normally functioning VDTs, a National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) study of the adverse effects on pregnancy from their use, al long delayed, is finally due for publication in 1989 (BNA, DLR 1988).

Short of dealing with the VDT as a reproductive hazard, unions have bargained for limitations on its use so as to avoid eyestrain, defining frequency and length of rest periods away from the machine. Several unions, - SEIU, ILGWU, and AFSCME - have also worked out agreements by which pregnant workers may request temporary transfer from them, or alternately a leave of absence without pay. Solutions to many issues concerned with workstation design affecting chairs, document holders, lighting, space, and anti-glare screens have also been achieved. (CLUW, Chap 7).

Conclusion

The recognition that dual-earner families now comprise the main part of the workforce has led to the recognition that the old values of workplace and family are often in serious conflict. Attempts to resolve the causes of this conflict have not gone far enough. However, the agreements between unions and employers which have been achieved strongly suggest that many of issues are on the way to solution, while many others stand high on the agendas of labor and management negotiation. More and more unions are recognizing their responsibility for initiating discussion of these matters and are achieving partial if not total solutions through negotiation of improved union contracts.

An important evidence of ongoing success in accommodating the needs of work and family to each other is widely recognized in the 1989 contract between AT&T and the CWA. It provides for a wide range of programs including a $5 million fund as seed money for child care facilities, parental leave for a year with continuation of some benefits, payment of certain adoption expenses, creation of tax-free funds for payment of dependent care costs, unpaid leave up to a year to care for seriously ill dependents and flextime schedules for family emergencies (Bennett and Trost, Swoboda). Almost all of the needs emphasized by unions in recent years are here addressed.

TABLE 1 Employed wage and salary workers by sex and union affiliation and full- or part-time status, 1987 and 1988

Sex and full- or part-time status	1987 Total Employed	1987 Union Members	1987 % of members	1988 total employed	1988 Union Members	1988 % o mem
Total, 16 years +	99,303	16,913		101,407	17,002	
men	52,938	11,071	65.4	53,912	11,019	6
women	46,365	5,842	34.5	47,495	5,982	3
Full-time workers	80,636	15,670		82,692	15,773	
part-time workers	18,467	1,243	6.5	18,716	1,229	

Source: excerpted from U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, NEWS, 1/27/89.

Table 2 Employment of Wage and Salary Workers by Union Affiliation and Sex, 1977, 1983, 1985

	1977	1983	1985
	(in millions)		
Total Employed	81,334	88,290	94,521
Union Members	19,335	17,717	16,996
Percent of total	26.5	20.1	18.0
Women Employed	32,940	40,433	32,500
Percent of total employed	40.5	45.8	46.0
Women Union Members	5,329	5,908	5,732
Percent of total employed	16.2	14.6	13.2
Percent of total membership	27.6	33.3	33.7
Women Members by race			
White	4,307	4,710	4,501
Black	1,021	1,020	1,058
Hispanic	--	336	333

Sources for 1977 data, Earnings and Other Characteristics of Organized Workers, May 1977, BLS Report #556 (1979); for 1983 data, Employment and Earnings (January 1985), p. 206; for 1985 data, Employment and Earnings (January 1986) p. 213. Cited in Ruth Needleman and Lucretia Dewey Tanner, "Women in Unions: Current Issues," in Koziara, et al. eds., Working Women: Past, Present and Future, Industrial Relations Research Association Series, Washington, D.C.: BNA, 1987, p. 190.

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NOTES

1. CLUW in 1989 is preparing a research volume of case studies from a variety of unions which have successfully incorporated provisions for such programs in their collective agreements. This will bring up to date and enlarge upon earlier reports contained in, for example, NYC-CLUW, Child Care Committee, "Bargaining for Child Care: Contract Language for Union Parents," 1985; and earlier editions of CLUW, "Effective Contract Language for Union Women," n.d. This article in a number of particulars follows the CLUW manuscript. References to it will read, CLUW Chapter.

2. Examples of these natioinal union publications include, Marjorie Stern and Joanne Kitch, AFT Women's Rights Committee "Negotiating Change for Women: An Overview," Washington, D.C., AFT, processed, no date (most items cover contracts negotiated in the 70s); American Federation of Flight Attendants (AFA) Washington, D.C., processed, no date (early 1980s?); Graphic Arts International Union (GAIU) "GAIU Contract Provisions and Career Equity for Women," and "A Woman's Guide to her Job Rights," Washington, D.C., no date.

3, See Marjorie Stern and Joanne Kitch of the AFT Women's Rights Committee,"Negotiating Change for Women: An Overview," undated (1974?), processed, which provided model clauses for bargaining, together with clauses in effect very widely throughout the country at the time they wrote, including one going back to 1943. To be sure school boards generally granted paid maternity leave before most other employers, and before union contracts. The reason had little to do with the relative health or disability of the employee, but rather because children were not expected to understand or even know about pregnancy. The union as it gained power, built on local permissive legislation, likening pregnancy to sick leave. Under such clauses pregnant teachers received an amount of pay not by right of pregnancy, but calculated as the difference between their regular salaries and those of the substitute called in to take their places.

4. A declining workforce rapidly aged by the union's enforcement of its seniority clauses caused the union to turn over the some of the early centers to the communities where they were located, or to include children from the community in the Center's enrollment.

5. Nixon's veto read in part, "[F]or the federal government to plunge headlong financially into supporting child development would commit the vast moral authority of the National Government to the side of communal approaches to child-bearing over the family-centered approach..."

6. Notes taken at the Conference, sponsored by the National Academy of Science, Committee on Child Development Research and Public Policy, March 20-21, 1989. See also Long, 1988. She states (p. 3) that AFSCME is participating in over 50 onsite child care centers, nationwide." These would presumably all be at government work-sites

7. For full details, both on DCAP and the New York program, see BNA, 1988. For a decription of a variety of such plans together with the contract provisions establishing them, see BNA, 1986, pp.280-89.

8. AFSCME reports that it "represents more organized child care workers than any other AFL-CIO union. In New York City alone...6000 employees working at 343 day care centers are union members...Council 1707 [made up of employees of private social agencies] is in the process of organizing 2,000 family day care providers...Childcare workers in Minnesota have negotiated substantial wage increases and now start at $8.42 per hour and progress up to $12. with fully paid benefits covering health insurance, paid holidays and sick and vacation leaves." Long, pp 4-5.

9. These occupations are neither professionalized nor licensed. A critique of the U. S. Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupations carried out in the 70s disclosed that these workers were rated lower than parking lot attendants or animal caretakers (Sexton, p.39).

10. For facts, see Decision of District of Columbia Circuit in OCAW v. American Cyanimid Company, #81-1687, August 24, 1984. In a footnote to this decision, we learn that The Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) after suffering defeat in its damage suit in behalf of the women, turned to the EEOC and charged sex discrimination under Title VII. This tactic resulted in a settlement, the terms of which were not to be disclosed.